

BAMA

INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

APRIL, 1991
VOLUME 13, NUMBER 4

Inside
• Robert Jones

Also
• Spring Football
• Basketball Success
• Gymnastics
And More



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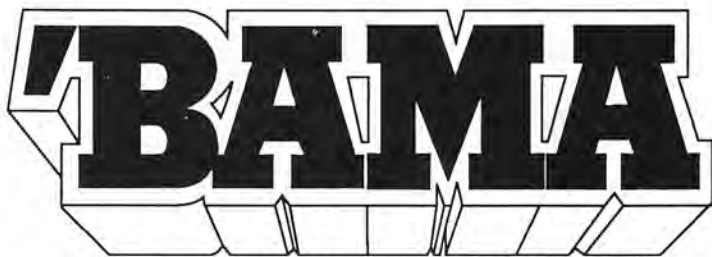


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'BAMA, Inside The Crimson Tide/APRIL '91



INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

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Barry Fikes Photo



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BAMA SCORECARD

A Spring Update

Alabama's football team completed 40 per cent of its spring training time—six of 15 practices—before taking off after the March 21 workout for The University's spring break.

Alabama Head Coach Gene Stallings has kept a stiff upper lip about having spring practice broken by the 10-day break. He says he doesn't worry about the players not having carryover, concentrating instead on the opportunity those with minor injuries will have to recover. And he hasn't used the excuse that Alabama took its spring break at an unlikely time: only two weeks before the end of the normal class schedule. To have held spring training later would have run the players into final examinations. To have started earlier would have risked bad weather.

The number one question of the spring is: Who will be the quarterback. At the break, that question had not been answered. The good news was that three have been adequate—Jay Barker, Danny Davis and Danny Woodson. The bad news is that none has stepped forward to take the job.

At the break, Stallings said he was still concerned about the things he had been concerned about prior to spring training: quarterback, offensive line, field goal kicker and free safety. However, the offensive line (see page 8) seems to be coming along, one deep at least; Hamp Greene has been comforting as a placekicker; and Brian Stutson has been a standout at safety. One rumored problem in the secondary: a concern over the academic status of returning starting cornerback Mark McMillian. One insider says if McMillian is eligible he might return at left cornerback with George Teague (who has been very good) moving to safety. Stacy Harrison at strong safety and Antonio Langham at right cornerback have been outstanding. Stallings said he was pleased with work on the defensive line and linebacker and with the running backs and receivers on offense.

Additional standouts appear to be: tight end Derrick Warren; wide receivers Rick Brown and Donnie Finkley; tailback Derrick Lassic; fullbacks Kevin Turner, Martin Houston and Junior Sewell; nose tackle Robert Stewart; outside linebacker Steve Webb.

Most of the experiments (position changes) have involved walkons (running back Jeff Marshall and wide receiver Roman Cölburn to defensive back, tight end Monroe Harrison from tight end to defensive end), but there have been a few others. Running back Craig Harris worked a few days at safety before going back to offense. John Clay does seem more at home in the offensive line than at linebacker. And there is still talk that nose tackle James Gregory might have a future on the offensive line, though he hasn't been tried there. Part of the reason for that is a question about another nose tack-

le, Jason Milner. The redshirt freshman has an irregular heartbeat. Surgery is scheduled this summer to correct it.

The Final Practice

Although the starting time for Alabama's final football practice of spring training on Saturday, April 13, is still listed as "To Be Announced," a handful of other events indicate practice will begin about 2 p.m. The practice, as all other Saturday practices this spring, is open to the public since there is no A-Day Game this year. Practice will be at Thomas Field.

At 10 a.m. the Walk of Fame will be conducted at Denny Chimes on The University campus. The 1990 Bama captains—Gary Hollingsworth, Efrum Thomas and Philip Doyle—are scheduled to have their handprints and footprints join those of previous Tide captains. (Doyle may have a problem. The All-America placekicker is also a member of the Bama baseball team, which is at Georgia on April 13). At 11 a.m. Alabama will dedicate the Hank Crisp Indoor Facility next to the Thomas Field practice area.

A couple of A-Club functions (not open to the public) continue until 2 p.m.

Hank Crisp

The man for whom Alabama's indoor football practice field building has been named (the name of the facility now has the incongruous label, "The Hank Crisp Indoor Building") was a coaching legend. He was an Alabama coach in football (assistant) and basketball (head coach) from 1925-42 and 1946 and later served as athletics director, stepping down when Paul Bryant returned as athletics director and head football coach in 1958. Crisp had recruited Bryant to Alabama as a player. In all, he spent 49 years in service to The University. He died January 23, 1970, only moments before his formal induction into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame.

Bryant-Denny Stadium

Even if Alabama Head Coach Gene Stallings wanted to have an A-Day Game (which he did not), no facility is available for a spring football game this year. The AstroTurf has been removed from Bryant-Denny Stadium and new Prescription Athletic Turf grass is going down.

Bobby Rice, director of facilities for Alabama's athletics department, said that installation of the new turf is on schedule. He said most of the preliminary work for putting in the turf had been done and that the actual grass would probably be sprigged by May 15. The field does not have to be ready until about August 15.

All-Star Nominees

Alabama's sports information office hasn't wasted any time in nominating players for all-star recognition. That's because many pre-season football publications

don't even wait until the end of spring training to accumulate information used in making preseason predictions and selecting preseason all-star teams. Therefore, the Tide's sports information staff had to make its nominees based exclusively on previous performance.

Bama's nominees include two men who missed practically all of last season, tailback Siran Stacy (injured in the opening game) and wide receiver Craig Sanderson (injured in Alabama's second game). The other Crimson Tide nominees are: strong safety Stacy Harrison, nose tackle Robert Stewart, inside linebacker John Sullins, fullback Kevin Turner and outside linebacker Steve Webb.

On The Auction Block

Top item being offered in an auction for the benefit of the Leukemia Society at Commonwealth Stadium in Lexington, Kentucky on April 3? The auction is part of a "Rick Pitino Breakfast of Champions" fund-raiser and the most talked about item on the block is the plaid jacket Pitino wore when Alabama played Kentucky in Lexington this year. The jacket was a gimmick that brought a smile to the face of the Man From Plaid, Crimson Tide Head Coach Wimp Sanderson.

Burgess All-SEC

Alabama junior forward Linda Burgess was selected to the All-Southeastern Conference Women's Basketball team this year. The team was selected by the league's head coaches. Burgess led Alabama in scoring and rebounding with averages of 15.8 and 7.9. She scored 20 or more points in seven games. Burgess came to Bama from Calhoun Junior College, where she was an All-America.

Another Star Coming

The state that gave Alabama men's basketball James Robinson is also sending Tide Women's Coach Rick Moody a potential scoring machine. Niesa Johnson, a guard at Clinton, Mississippi, signed with Bama in last November's early signing period. As a senior she did nothing but improve her already brilliant reputation. She averaged 35 points per game, was named Mississippi Player of the Year for both boys and girls basketball, and was the Gatorade Player of the Year in the nation in girls basketball. She set a national high school record for girls basketball with 11 three-point shots in one game, a game in which she scored 62 points.

Baseball Starts Strong

No sport has more statistics kept than does baseball. Alabama's sports information office has determined that Alabama's six wins in the month of February marked a school record for wins in that short, cold month. Alabama was 16-3 as of March 19, the Crimson Tide's best start since

1983 when Bama opened 16-2. In 1983 it will be remembered Alabama won the Southeastern Conference tournament and advanced to the finals of the College World Series. That Tide team finished with a 46-11 record.

Stadium Dedication

Alabama followers are invited to make a day of it when The University dedicates the Sewell-Thomas Baseball Stadium. A barbecue will begin at 12:30 under a tent between the baseball field and Coleman Coliseum. Tickets for the barbecue, \$6 each, will be available at the tent. Dedication ceremonies begin at 3:30 p.m. At 4 p.m. the Tide will take on Ole Miss in a baseball doubleheader.

1991 SEC Tournament

The 1991 Southeastern Conference baseball tournament will be in LSU's Alex Box Stadium in Baton Rouge beginning May 16. The top six regular season finishers advance to the SEC Tournament.

Chipping Away

David Kirkpatrick of the Alabama men's golf team chipped in for a birdie on the final hole to take the individual championship by one stroke at the Jerry Pate Invitational at Tiger Point in Pensacola, Florida, March 10. Kirkpatrick had a 74 in the final round to go with earlier rounds of 75 and 72 for a 221 total in the 54-hole tournament. Bama finished in third place in the tournament, which is sponsored by the former Crimson Tide and PGA golf star. Kirkpatrick is Bama's leading scorer this year with a 72.7 average after 15 rounds.

Kirkpatrick's title was the third in two years for an Alabama player. Sean Pacetti won the Southeastern Invitational in 1990 and Spike McRoy was the champion at the 1990 Louisiana Classic.

High Ranking

Alabama men's tennis player Ellis Ferreira got his highest singles ranking ever when the Volvo Tennis Rankings were released in March. The senior was ranked number 20. Ferreira and Rick Witsken dropped to number 10 from their previous fifth place ranking in doubles, even though they had won seven straight matches.

The Crimson Tide team of Coach John Kreis did not break into the rankings, although it did receive votes from the board of coaches.

Reservations At 21

Alabama Women's Tennis Coach Karin Gaiser last season began what was expected to be an elite honorary, the "21 Club" for players who collected 21 or more wins in a season. To her delight, it was almost standing room only at "21" as four players made that benchmark in 1990. And the club could get more crowded this year. With a month remaining in the season both Jane Phillips and Jenny Whalen had made it in, Phillips for the second season. And three other players—Brenda Coffin, Mindy Leach and Amy Mascotti—were each within three wins of 21.

Although no Bama individuals are currently among the top-ranked players in the nation, the Tide women are among "Others receiving votes" in team rankings. The Alabama women have never been ranked, but this year's team is making a good bid. Through March 23 the Tide had a 3-2 record against ranked teams, having defeated Tennessee, Houston and Texas A&M, having lost to Georgia and Indiana.

Another Signee

Alabama has added its third volleyball signee. Marta Bickert, a 5-11 hitter out of El Toro, California, is the newest member of Coach Dorothy Franco-Reed's team. In addition to being an all-star volleyball, basketball and softball player, Bickert is in the top five per cent of her class academically. She joins Melanie Ryer and Jenny Vieth on Alabama's list of volleyball signees this year.

Athlete Of The Year

Rita Garay of Puerto Rico, a sophomore swimming star for Alabama's women's team, won three gold medals and three silver medals at last summer in the Central American Games. Partly as a result of that, she has been named the Puerto Rican Female Athlete of the Year.

Tough Schedule

Talk about your tough schedules. Alabama's gymnastics team went through regular season competition with an undefeated 16-0 record. What makes that re-

Robert Jones May Be Gone

One of the hazards of publishing a monthly magazine is the lag time between various deadlines and the day the issue reaches the reader. For the most part we have been very lucky in this regard during our 12-plus years of publishing 'BAMA. However, in our 13th year we may have had some bad luck on a cover story.

Long before spring training got under way we had to make decisions on what stories would be in this issue, make and/or find the photographs to accompany the articles, do the interview work and writing, and, in some cases, have the stories in type and to the printer. The color section of this magazine—the cover and about half the inside pages—were printed nearly two weeks before this issue was scheduled to be in your mailbox.

On March 20, the next-to-last day of football practice before the spring break, we noticed that tailback Robert Jones was not in drills. However, that was a day in which a number of Tiders were absent for all or part of the practice because of class schedules. When Jones was absent again Thursday, the final day of practice before spring break, we smelled a rat.

During that final practice 'BAMA learned that Jones' locker had been cleaned out. And after practice Bama Head Coach Gene Stallings announced that Jones was off the team. As is his custom, Stallings did not elaborate on the reason or reasons for Jones' dismissal nor give any indication as to whether Jones might return. (Stallings has left the door open in the past.)

markable is the number of ranked teams Coach Sarah Campbell's Crimson Tide rolled over during the season. Bama (which was ranked fourth in the nation going into the Southeastern Conference championships) defeated the following ranked teams during the year: Georgia, Florida, LSU, Arizona, Arizona State, Oklahoma, UCLA, Penn State, Missouri and Auburn. Alabama had two wins each over Arizona State and Auburn.

The nation's top ten as of March 22: Utah, Georgia, Oregon State, Alabama, Florida, Utah State, LSU, Brigham Young, Arizona and Oklahoma.

The Alabama women broke or tied every school individual record during the past season. Dee Dee Foster had the nation's best score in vault, a near-perfect 9.95. Alabama's average score of 48.56 in balance beam was best in the nation.

Signee Earns Honor

Will Brown, a defensive back from Syracuse, New York, who signed with Alabama, has been named the high school player of the year by the Atlanta Touchdown Club.

Eligibility Facts

It is true that a handful of Bama football signees are not yet eligible.

The best information available is that seven of the 24 prep signees are not yet eligible and there is evidence that as many as three will have a very difficult time becoming eligible. However, it is too early to speculate. Final compilations of grade point averages and curricula cannot be made until completion of the spring semester. And standardized tests (ACT and SAT) are given through June. Therefore, it will be sometime in July before a final count is known.

Copeland No Problem

A hot rumor in March was that John Copeland, who is participating in spring training at defensive end, should not have been admitted as a midyear transfer from Hinds Junior College in Mississippi. The Southeastern Conference reportedly received complaints from three unnamed colleges about Bama's acceptance of Copeland. However, Copeland had a 2.7 grade point average and earned his Associate Arts degree at Hinds, making him eligible for midyear transfer.

Gymnasts Fall

Alabama was unsuccessful in its attempt to repeat as Southeastern Conference gymnastics champion. The Crimson Tide held a slim lead going to the final event, but two falls on the vault allowed Georgia to slip ahead of Bama by 5/100 point. Georgia, the nation's second-ranked team and first seed in the tournament, scored 194.10, Alabama 194.05.

Tide Diver All-America

Sophomore Jennifer Mahaney, competing in her first NCAA Swimming and Diving Championships, finished third in platform diving to earn All-America. Bama finished 21st in the meet.

Building An Offensive Line

by Kirk McNair

The most overlooked are among the most important in football and Tide must find offensive linemen

The building of an offensive line has been a top priority of Alabama's spring football training plans. However, the ugly truth is that the building of an offensive line must start in February, not March or April. And not this past February, but Februarys past, when new football talent is recruited to the fold. Unfortunately, Alabama has not signed many linemen in the few years prior to 1991 and that makes development of the ones available critical.

Alabama Head Coach Gene Stallings has spelled it out clearly and repeatedly since the end of last season: "I'm concerned about the offensive line. Depth is a major concern. The people who are out front at almost every position have played either very little or not at all with the exception of Matt Hammond at left tackle. And the people behind them have just no experience. Our job is to get them ready to play."

That job belongs primarily to two Crimson Tide assistant coaches, Jimmy Fuller and Mike Solari. It also belongs to Stallings and to Strength Coach LeBaron Caruthers, but the day-to-day responsibility is that of the line coaches. Fuller works with Alabama's guards and centers, Solari with the tackles.

Over the years it has been noted that recruiting limits mean almost every team has good skill position players. Frequently, it is the men in the trenches who make the difference in football teams. From an offensive standpoint, it is very difficult for passers to pass or runners to run if blockers don't block. Ironically, Alabama's success in 1989, when the Tide went 10-2 and was the Southeastern Conference's best offensive team, may have been a horse-before-the-cart situation. Fuller, who has been an offensive line coach under three consecutive Crimson Tide head coaches (Ray Perkins, Bill Curry and Stallings) believes that the play of the offensive line in 1989 being better than last year "was not because they worked harder or because they were coached better. And (quarterback) Gary (Hollingsworth) wasn't any better in 1989 than he was in 1990.



Alabama Assistant Coach Jim Fuller is working to develop the guards and centers who will be at the front of the Crimson Tide offensive attack this spring. His hat is getting well-worn as it is thrown in disgust at appropriate times. A manager has been assigned to retrieve it for him.

Barry Fikes Photo

You have to look at what we lost. We lost great receivers and we lost a superstar tailback, and that limited us when we were already limited. I never said the 1989 offensive line wasn't good, but I did say they played above their heads."

Fuller sees Alabama situation in a good news-bad news light. "We're faced with trying to replace four starters on the offensive line, but it's not all bad. It's exciting to go out there and work with guys and see them improve from the beginning of practice to the end of practice each day. Now that doesn't mean it's as good as we want or as fast as we want. But there has been improvement. Another good thing is that everything is open; anyone can win a starting job. That makes everything very competitive. On the other hand, I realize we've got so, so far to go and not much time to get there. And one thing that will make it difficult to get there is we don't have any really mean guys on the offensive line. I want them to be nice guys and have class and do the right things, but when they step on the football field they've got to have a change in attitude. We've had those over the years, going back to John Hannah and Dwight Stephenson and, more recently, Roger Shultz. And we've got to have that again."

At center, Fuller is ready to go on record: "Before the guy even starts his first

ball game, Toby Sheils will be just as good a center as we've had around here in several years. And I'm talking about Roger (Shultz) and Wes (Neighbors). I thought Wes was a great talent. But Toby's got the talent to do the things we need to do at center. He's smart like Roger and Wes were smart. He's not as big right now (6-2, 250), but he will be by the time he's a senior. And he's got great techniques. So I feel comfortable with Toby being the starter for us." Sheils, who is from Fairhope, will be a sophomore this fall.

Behind Sheils is Chad Gladden, a 6-3, 254-pound redshirt freshman from Cherokee County High School in Centre. "He's just a young pup," Fuller said. "I'm not being critical, but he doesn't yet understand the level at which he has to play for us. This is Division I and Alabama has the national championship as its goal. He won't know what it takes until he gets into real competition. And I think he will finally understand and be a real talent whether it be at center or at tackle. And I think he'll contribute before the season is over next year."

In many ways, center is the most demanding position played by an offensive lineman. First of all, he must handle the ball. While most people take the center-quarterback exchange for granted (until there is a missed exchange), it is a skill that takes many hours of practice. And that's not even considering the demands of a center when the team goes to spread, or shotgun, formation. Beyond that, the center makes the calls for the offensive linemen (the audibles that designate blocking assignments against the particular pre-snap defensive alignment). And, then, of course, he must come off and block.

"One plus for us is that both Toby and Chad can make those calls," Fuller said.

In addition to tackle Matt Hammond, who started all of last year as a redshirt freshman, Bama returns one other starter from the end of 1990. William Barger was a backup performer at both left and right guards until the Mississippi State game, when starting left guard Chris Robinette suffered a freak injury, being speared by a helmet in his rib cage with the result that his lung collapsed. Barger moved into that left guard spot the rest of the year.

Now Barger, an upcoming sophomore, is at right guard. "It's for three reasons, but only one of them counts," Fuller said. "The first reason is that Coach Stallings thought he'd be better at right guard. But we also looked at right tackle, not having anyone who played. So putting William there puts one experienced man on the right side. And, finally, William thinks he can play better at right guard. He's right-handed and feels better in a right-handed stance."



Mike Solari is the Alabama assistant football coach who works with Crimson Tide offensive tackles. He realizes that a lack of overwhelming physical talent means Bama linemen must succeed by using excellent technique and working together as a unit in 1991.

Barry Fikes Photo

Other than the stance, the primary difference in right guard and left guard in Alabama's philosophy of right and left rather than strongside and weakside (in which the guards and tackles flip-flop) is that most football teams are "right-handed," more likely to run right than left. And, ordinarily, the right guard is heavier than the left guard, since he is on the "point of attack" side. But schemes and techniques for the two are the same.

Fuller said "One of the concerns I have about William (Barger) is his weight. He's up to 288 which is too heavy for him to operate and do what we want him to do. (Barger is listed as 6-3, 270, and that's where Fuller wants him.) Potentially, he can be as good as any offensive lineman we have had at Alabama in sometime because he's got the quickness, he's got the speed, he's got the knowledge. He just needs more than 10 days in pads this spring to be a really great player. But he can be. He's got the potential to be a real-

ly outstanding lineman."

Number one at left guard through the early part of spring training is a true success story. George Wilson, a 6-2, 255-pound junior, was redshirted in 1988, missed all of his freshman year with a severe injury to his foot, the result of an accidental self-inflicted gunshot wound, then performed in a backup role at both left and right guards last fall. "George Wilson will always give you everything he possibly can," Fuller said. "But, at best he's limited and we know that and he knows that. Thank goodness he's got the character and the heart and all those other things that go with being a great player and a great person or he wouldn't even be on the team right now."

One surprise for Bama might be John Clay. A former inside linebacker, Clay was moved to guard by Stallings this spring. "I think that's going to be a good addition," Fuller said, "but he needs about three times as much work as we're going to be

able to give him this spring. But I think he can help us this fall." Clay, a sophomore, saw only spot action as a linebacker but has been impressive in early drills at right guard behind Barger. He is listed as 6-1, 226, but Clay ate himself from linebacker to offensive line. Current weight: 260.

Also being used in practice at center this spring is Jared Watson (6-2, 225, sophomore), who is really a long snapper. At guard spots, Bama is also working senior Tim Matheny (6-3, 270), who has seen only limited action in his career since suffering a knee injury as a freshman; and walkons Mike Worthan (5-10, 255, redshirt freshman), Lee Frazer (6-2, 265, sophomore) and Jason Gordon (6-5, 275, junior).

Fuller admits that he is bothered that he has not had more success with the offensive line since he joined the staff prior to the 1984 season. "I'm trying to be a better coach. But my problem is that I've found I'm a pretty good coach with good players and an average coach with average players. I'm grateful our coaches realized that and went out this year and signed some guys this year."

Nevertheless, Fuller said he is not counting on any freshmen coming in and earning starting jobs in the offensive line in time for the Temple game on September 7. "If we have a freshman who can play, that's a bonus," he said.

The importance of offensive line play, as well as the complexity of getting five men to function as one, is evident by the apportionment of two coaches to that task. While Fuller is tutoring the guards and centers, Mike Solari is right beside him coaching the tackles.

"We're trying to find two tackles who can knock defensive ends off the line of scrimmage and who can maintain the width of the pocket in our pass protection," Solari said.

Four men are getting most of the work for the two tackle positions. Matt Hammond (6-3, 260, sophomore), the returning starter at left tackle; Charlie Dare (6-5, 290, senior), who is working primarily at left tackle, but also getting practice time at right tackle; and Roosevelt Patterson (6-3, 290, sophomore) and Johnny Howard (6-3, 270, junior), the primary competitors at right tackle. A walkon, Kirk Lawson (6-4, 285, redshirt freshman) is also working at offensive tackle.

In early spring work both Dare and Patterson came in for special mention by Stallings.

"The key thing," Solari said, "is for us to have two of these young men surface, to rise to the occasion, and for the other two to be darned close in competitive ability and to be able to execute our offense so if we do need a backup we'll have someone to take that spot without a drop."

While strength and quickness are the natural and/or developed attributes most

Is This Tide's 1991 Starting Offensive Line?



Roosevelt Patterson



William Barger



Toby Sheils



George Wilson



Charlie Dare

important to offensive tackle play, the stereotypes—big, dumb jocks—can't get it done. Solari said "Because they are so young, this spring we've got to be able to give them all the different looks and teach them the adjustments they have to make. They have to have a foundation they can go back to."

Solari said Hammond "is the returning starter, so he's kind of leading at that left tackle position. He's got 12 games under his belt, but he's still only got one year of playing under his belt. He's young. He has a lot of learning to do and further development to make, but he's on course to being a fine offensive lineman. There are things he needs to improve on, most of which will come with strength and maturity."

Fuller noted, "Mike Solari has brought Charlie Dare farther than any other of us (offensive line coaches) who have been here."

While Solari isn't ready to hand out any compliments, he said "Charlie Dare is working hard. I think he's going to get better and better. This is his senior year, so this is the year he's got to do it if he's ever going to be a starter for The University of Alabama. But he's got to get every repetition he can get competing against the defense."

Solari said that Patterson, who was out of football in 1989 for academic reasons, then redshirted last fall, "of all the tackles has the most raw ability for an offensive lineman. But he hasn't competed for two years. However, if we had it to do all over again, we'd redshirt him again. Now he's got three years of eligibility remaining. And that's exciting. It's just a matter of Roosevelt working with his tools and working with the nomenclature and learning our offensive philosophy. It's just a matter of him working enough to be comfortable with it, so he doesn't have to think about it; so he can just go out and do it."

One of the worst things that has happened in the early part of the spring, Solari said, was Johnny Howard being injured in an early practice and missing some work. "Johnny has been a backup

right tackle for two years, so he's always been up with the varsity and so he should feel comfortable with the offense because he knows the terms and he knows the blocking schemes. Still, being a starter would be new in terms of the level of execution expected of him. He's got to get stronger to be able to execute properly."

Solari said the biggest weakness on the offensive line "is pass blocking by our offensive tackles because it takes so long to develop those skills. We also have a long way to go in our run blocking, but pass blocking takes more time to learn to do."

Most of Alabama's spring work will be fullspeed, meaning a lot of scrimmage work. "The reason we have to have a lot of fullspeed work is because adjustments have to be made fullspeed," Solari said. "We can draw it up on the blackboard and it's easy to block, but when it starts breathing it gets a lot more difficult. There are adjustments that have to be made pre-snap, when they come off the ball, and as the play develops."

Solari noted that most people can't appreciate what it takes to make an effective offensive line. "It takes time for it to mature, to gel, because it is five men functioning at one. You put one new man in with it and it can throw everything off. When a right guard is going to his right he's working with the right tackle and when he's going to his left he's working with the center. It's a tremendous unit that has to be built by working together and communicating together."

"It takes time and it takes maturity. And it takes raw, physical strength, which we don't really have. We'll have to build that up in the weightroom and in recruiting. In the meantime we have to be able to execute properly, be outstanding in our techniques. In 1991 to be a good offensive line we've got to be good technicians. We're not just going to throw people off the ball, knock people around. Our guys have got to have pride and good work habits. If they will work hard and play as a unit, they can

be a very good offensive line. You don't have to be big, strong, physical people; it goes back to being able to execute as one. And that's a key thing about this offensive line. They ought to get better and better every day. I believe that Jimmy (Fuller) and I will know at the end of spring training that they have improved. And that should give them the confidence and the motivation to have a great offseason program this summer. They have a great opportunity."

Solari said that Alabama's offensive linemen have one advantage they may not appreciate in practice each day. "At Alabama, our offensive linemen get to go against one of the finest defensive teams in the country. Our players on the offensive line are practicing against outstanding athletes on the other side of the line of scrimmage. That helps speed up the progress our offensive linemen make. I've coaches in other programs where we couldn't show our offensive linemen that speed and that quickness and that raw strength that defensive player has. At Alabama they are going against that type player every day in practice."

Fuller points out the need to put the best five men in the five front positions. "If Mike (Solari) feels that Dare and Patterson and Hammond are all ready to play, and we think that maybe we don't have one ready at both guards and center, we have to consider the possibility of moving one of those tackles to one of the other positions. It's just one of many, many things that go into building an offensive line."

"But it comes down to getting people who are big and strong enough to come off the line and block people. We're doing a lot of one-on-one and group work as blockers. We're not spending a lot of time on shifting and running around and pass blocking. We want to have a line that will block people at the level we had it in our last regular season game. You win games when you have an offensive line that can block and a defensive line that can stop that."

Don't expect the building process to be finished this spring. But a foundation is being constructed.

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He Wants To Be Number One

by Kirk McNair

Despite 1990 success, Crimson Tide sophomore overlooked in battle at defensive left end

While most of the attention at Alabama football practice this spring is on replacing departed offensive performers, there are a few gaps on defense, too. Among those are the two end positions, manned last year primarily by All-Southeastern Conference performer George Thornton (left end) and Byron Holdbrooks (right). The top candidates for those two jobs are all essentially right ends. They include Eric Curry, a 6-6, 265-pound junior, whose career has been interrupted from time-to-time by injury; junior college All-America John Copeland (6-4, 280), who has grown larger than life as Bama fans await him; and Jeremy Nunley, a 6-5, 250-pound sophomore who has played a little at left end.

(The difference between a left end and a right end is essentially body build. Most of offensive teams are "right handed," meaning the plays are usually run to the right side. Therefore, the defense wants its best pass rusher at right end—coming from the quarterback's blind side—and its most muscular defensive lineman at left end—able to stay in the gap and pile up inside running plays.)

Ironically, all three leading end candidates this spring were listed as outside linebackers when originally signed by Alabama—Curry in 1988, Copeland and Nunley in 1989. Curry (who was 210) and Nunley (who was 220) have grown to down lineman size at Bama, while Copeland (who was 235) made the switch at Hinds Junior College in Mississippi.

Most expect Curry to take over at right end this spring while Copeland is considered the leader at left end. Backup nose tackle James Gregory (6-4, 295) will also get some work at end. But don't count out Jeremy Nunley.

Although in Alabama's defensive scheme the ends are expected to be able to play either side, Nunley is the only one who has done so. Hardly anyone noticed that, just as hardly anyone noticed that Nunley quietly made first team All-Southeastern Conference Freshman and second team Freshman All-America by *The Football News* at the end of last season.

In 1990, following a redshirt season, the soft-spoken Nunley turned in 22 tackles,

including four sacks that resulted in 21 lost yards for opponents. He also broke up one pass and recovered a fumble. He had his best game statistically against Vanderbilt, five tackles, and had two sacks for 17 yards in losses against Cincinnati.

But Nunley, who played end as well as on the punting teams in all 12 Bama games last year, remembers two other games with far more fondness than those in which he had his best statistics.

The Winchester, Tennessee, native enjoys going home because Alabama has victories over his homestate Vols in his two years at Bama. Last year's 9-6 Crimson Tide victory in Knoxville is particularly memorable for Nunley. "I was in the game and Tennessee was driving down to our goalline," he remembered. "They got down to about the three and I looked over on the sidelines to see if Coach (Mike) Dubose was taking me out. There I was about 235, maybe 240, going up against (Tennessee offensive tackle Charles) McRae, about 6-7, 320. I was real surprised that he left me in. And we stopped them; held them to a field goal." Although Winchester is about halfway between Nashville and Huntsville, Nunley said most of his friends there are Tennessee fans. "I hope we can keep this streak going," he said of Alabama's football dominance of the Vols.

Nunley also remembers Bama's 16-7 season-ending victory over Auburn in Birmingham. "I had a pretty good game and I had a sack, which is always exciting," he said. "The whole atmosphere of that game was so exciting."

Nunley, who was an all-star performer for Coach Red Roberts at Franklin County High School, selected Alabama over Tennessee and Georgia. "Alabama was the first school to show interest in me and they showed the most interest," he said. "And when I looked at all the schools I saw that Alabama had won far-and-away more national championships and Southeastern Conference championships than any other school and this seemed like the best place to be on a championship team."

Although Dubose doesn't specifically remember the incident at Tennessee



Jeremy Nunley

where he left Nunley in the game in a critical situation, he pointed out that "When we put Jeremy in the game we weren't putting him in to see how he would do. We were putting him in because we knew he would do well. Every time we tested him he responded to the challenge."

Nunley made the switch from outside linebacker to down lineman a year ago. He had been an outside linebacker throughout his first season, a redshirt year in 1989. "Coach (Ellis) Johnson told me they wanted to look at me as a down lineman and asked me to try it," Nunley said. "I agreed, and I've been there ever since. At first I didn't really want to do it, and I was disappointed. But I did it to help the team. Later I saw I had a better chance of playing there. Now I like it."

Dubose didn't know if Nunley resented the move or not, but suspected he did. "When we first decided to move him it wasn't because we thought he would be a great defensive end," Dubose said. "It was because we needed bodies and it looked like he was going to be pretty far down the depth chart at outside linebacker. Now while it's true we asked him to move, when a new staff comes in like we did and asks a kid to make a move, it's not really asking."

"But if Jeremy was concerned about it, he didn't show it and he never questioned it. When he first started working as a down lineman it wasn't very good. But he kept working. You could see him getting a little better every day. And he's got some qualities that make him well-suited to the down position. He has the temperament and he has good eyes and good intelligence and



Jeremy Nunley (73) was a surprising success story in Alabama's 1990 football season. He made the transition from outside linebacker to defensive end and was named to the All-SEC Freshman Team and second team Freshman All-America. Nunley played in every game as a backup. This year he wants to be the starter.

Barry Fikes Photo

he's quick. And he worked hard. He worked hard last spring and he worked hard last summer. He has an understanding of what we're trying to do and he has an understanding of what the offensive lineman is trying to do to him. He's a pleasure to work with and I think he's got a bright future.

"And I think Jeremy would agree that it not only helped the team, but it helped him to get a lot more playing time by making the move. It was best for him and for the team."

While Alabama calls its down linemen "ends," many people think of the position as a tackle. Nunley admitted that he preferred the designation "end" because, he said, "It sounds like more of a finesse position and that the man who plays it is a little smarter." Dubose noted, "It's hard for a player to move from a 'glamour' position like outside linebacker to a hands-on-the-ground position."

Both player and coach agree that Nunley will be a better player if he can

put on weight. However, they have slightly different stories. Nunley says he is about 250 now and wants to come in at about 260 or 265 in the fall and play at about 255 or 260. Dubose also wants him to put on about 10 to 15 pounds. "It's hard to play at 240," Dubose said. But what about Nunley's contention that he weighs 250? In his dreams, said the coach.

"But," Dubose said, "Jeremy can play the position at his size because of his eyes and his quickness. But, if he can keep that quickness and get bigger and stronger, he can be really special. He plays the run pretty well now. And with his quickness and his height and long arms, he can really help on pass rush."

Dubose doesn't take credit for Nunley's development. "The best thing he does is a knack, not a result of coaching," the coach said. "He gets an outside edge on the offensive lineman when he's rushing the passer and that makes him very, very effective. That's a gift and something he does best. He's got the intangibles to be a real fine defensive lineman."

Nunley, of course, gives much of the credit for his development to Dubose. "We're the first ones out to practice and the last ones in," Nunley said. "If you're going to play for Coach Dubose you're going to work or you're not going to be around. He really makes you work. And he's really smart. He teaches us a lot that makes playing the position easier."

Nunley also agrees with his coach that he has been able to overcome his lack of size with some other qualities. "I like to think that we're smarter (than the opposition). We spend a lot of time working on pre-snap reads. And I think I'm a little quicker, so that I can beat my man that way when I can't overpower him."

Nunley doesn't make any bones about his spring goal. "I want to impress the coaches," he said. "I think the man who comes out of spring training number one will go into the fall number one, and I want to be the starter. I know we've got some holes to fill, but I think the guys who have to fill them can do the job. Most of us have experience. I think we can do it."

Rouzie Couldn't Live Without It

by Donald F. Staffo

Former Crimson Tide
linebacker back for another
stint on coaching staff

Jeff Rouzie couldn't live without it. Therefore, he's back on the football field, coaching inside linebackers for Alabama.

When Bama Head Coach Gene Stallings appointed Rouzie to his staff on March 1 it marked the fifth time Rouzie had become a part of Alabama football. And it is a return to a position he held from 1977 through 1982, that of assistant coach. Rouzie admitted "I have been bouncing around trying to get back into coaching. When I left, Coach (Paul) Bryant told me if I could live without it, then I could get out of it and be happy. He said I would know within a couple of years if it was something that I couldn't live without. And, for me, that was the case.

"The real reward in coaching is when you work with a group of young men and five or ten years down the road you see them become successful in whatever it is they may want to do. You like to think you may have had a small part in helping them along the way. I couldn't find that in the business world. That's why I'm back in coaching."

Rouzie replaced Lance Van Zandt, who resigned to return to his native Texas.

Rouzie first came to Alabama in the late 1960s, recruited out of Jacksonville, Florida, to play linebacker for the Crimson Tide. He was a starting linebacker for the Tide in 1970 and in 1971 before his career was cut short by an automobile accident. He earned second team All-Southeastern Conference recognition in Bama's 11-1 1971 season. The year before, as a sophomore, he was picked as Most Valuable Lineman in Alabama's 24-24 tie with Oklahoma in the Astro-Bluebonnet Bowl. Bama followers from his playing days still remember Rouzie's debut in 1970 when he delivered a thundering tackle on Southern Cal's Sam Cunningham on an otherwise disastrous night for the Tide.

Rouzie got his first taste of coaching in 1973 as a graduate assistant for Bama, working with the offense. In 1974 he went to Wolfson High School in Jacksonville, his alma mater, as a defensive coach. From there he went to Rockledge High School in Florida, a promotion to defensive coordinator.

Then it was back to Alabama in 1977 where he worked with Paul Crane coaching Tide linebackers and had particularly heavy recruiting responsibilities.

Five years later, Rouzie left the world of coaching for the world of business. Lured by the big bucks of the Texas oil boom, Rouzie went to Houston as vice president in charge of marketing and sales for a petroleum firm.

"A good friend owned the business and said there was a lot of opportunity in oil," Rouzie said. "And there was. From a fi-

nancial standpoint I couldn't afford to turn it down. That's the only reason I got out of coaching."

In January, 1988, Rouzie got an offer to leave the oil business. Former Athletics Director Steve Sloan had a new program to implement and he offered Rouzie the job as director of Tide Pride, the athletic department's priority seating ticket plan.

"I had been wanting to get back into coaching and I took the Tide Pride job because I felt it would help me get closer to the football program and back into coaching," Rouzie said. "I felt Tide Pride was an important part of the football program and I thought I could help, but my real hope was to get back into coaching."

Rouzie had miscalculated. He was not to be a part of former Head Coach Bill Curry's staff. So only nine months after returning to The University, Rouzie resigned again and headed back into business, this time in Birmingham with an insurance firm. To be perfectly honest, Rouzie probably missed some sales because the draw of the Bama practice field, particularly after Gene Stallings took over as head coach, was a strong one. When Stallings called with the offer, it was not a difficult decision for Rouzie to accept.

Rouzie, now 40, is still as intense as he was as a player and as a young coach, and that is very, very intense. Football is important to Rouzie and he immersed himself in his job from day one, watching films and meeting with his fellow members of the defensive coaching staff.

"The first thing I had to do was get a complete understanding of what we're trying to accomplish in the line and in the secondary so I can better teach linebackers how to fit into what we're doing as a defensive unit," he said. "Coaches are teachers and in order for me to be a good teacher I have to have that complete understanding. I think I have some advantages because I played with (Defensive Line Coach Mike) Dubose and I played for and coached with (Secondary Coach and de facto Defensive Coordinator Bill) Oliver."

Moreover, Rouzie said that things haven't changed that much since he



Jeff Rouzie was an outstanding linebacker for Alabama in the early 1970s before an automobile accident ended his career. He was named Most Valuable Lineman in the 1970 Astro-Bluebonnet Bowl.

University of Alabama Photo

played and coached previously. "We're basically trying to accomplish the same things we did back then," he said. "Fundamentally, the game hasn't changed much. Ninety-five per cent of the time the game is won by the team that hits the hardest and blocks and tackles the best."

"One thing that has changed is the multiplicity of formations we see now. Today's offenses are definitely more complex than they used to be. That's due to the influence of the pro game."

"That's why it's so important that the defense quickly recognize what the offense is doing. We're going to be working a lot on that in spring practice. We want to become a smarter group in recognizing formations and being able to adjust after coming to the line of scrimmage."

Rouzie has one advantage in that both starting inside linebackers from last year, John Sullins and Derrick Oden, return. "They are the only ones with any real experience," Rouzie said. "Once you get past the first two, we've got our work cut out for us. This past season Alabama was fortunate that Sullins and Oden stayed healthy. Our immediate goal this spring is to improve our depth."

Sullins, a 6-2, 225-pound upcoming senior, was first team All-SEC last season. "John has a lot of natural instincts," Rouzie said. "He's a hardnosed player who doesn't mind getting in there and hitting you. He's what you look for in an inside linebacker. I think he's got pro potential." Sullins plays the "Mike" linebacker, meaning he lines up across from the tight end. Called on to stop the run at the point of attack, "Mike" is usually the bigger, more physical linebacker.

Oden, 6-1, 220, junior, has more speed than Sullins. He plays the "Jack" position, which calls for more pursuit. "Derrick has a lot of natural ability," Rouzie said. "He's got excellent speed and good quickness and he's also a tough kid. He needs to work on technique and fundamentals, and we'll concentrate on that this spring. I don't think there's any question he has All-SEC potential."

However, Rouzie wants much more than just two all-stars. He wants "four or five guys who we feel we can put into the game at any time and who can play winning football." He's searching for those other two or three players this spring from among Rodney Helton (6-1, 220, junior), Keith Neighbors (6-2, 210, junior), Victor Lockett (6-1, 225, sophomore), Michael Rogers (6-1, 215, redshirted freshman) and Mario Morris (6-2, 225, redshirted freshman). There are also some walk-on candidates: Jeff Foshee (5-9, 192, red-shirted freshman), John Hutt (6-0, 205, sophomore), Thomas Tillery (5-10, 205, sophomore) and Tab Whisenhunt (6-2, 220, sophomore).

Helton was a regular in 1989, but was injured part of last season and saw only limited playing time. "We're counting on



Jeff Rouzie has been a part of Alabama football off and on over the past two decades. Now he is on again, back with the Crimson Tide as coach of Alabama's inside linebackers.

Barry Fikes Photo

Rodney to have a good spring and be able to help us," Rouzie said. "He's been there before. He just needs to make up his mind to do it again. He has the ability to play either Mike or Jack." Beyond that Neighbors, Lockett and Clay have had a few snaps.

"This spring we're looking for players

who can help us next fall," Rouzie said. "The people who get it done in practice are the people who are going to play. No one has a lock on any position. Competition is what makes us better."

Jeff Rouzie is very happy to be back in the world of football competition, working to make Alabama football better.

Robert Jones:

He Plays In Shadow Of Cousin

by Steve Kirk

Although not as bad as it once was, senior tailback had tough act to follow

The year was 1987, and Bobby Humphrey was running rampant over the Southeastern Conference. Just the mention of his name brought comparisons to other great Alabama backs of the past—Shelby, Culliver, Ogilvie, Musso. . .

That season, Humphrey, with a year of eligibility remaining, had set a career rushing record with 3,228 yards. Crimson Tide fans were ecstatic over their offensive star and new hero.

But they heard the whispers.

The rumor mill suggested that Humphrey might not be the best running back in his own state. That was shocking enough, sure.

But could there be more?

The word from Birmingham, Humphrey's hometown, was that he might not be the best back in his own family.

Say what?

The numbers backed up the claim, as Robert Jones enjoyed a fantastic senior season at Parker High School on his way to breaking all of his first cousin Humphrey's high school records.

On his way to being named the state's Mr. Football by the Alabama Sports Writers Association, Jones set city records by running for 1,989 yards on the season, gaining 371 yards in one game and scoring six touchdowns in one game.

Take notice, Mr. Humphrey.

"He kids me about me breaking his records," said Jones. "He acts like he's mad because I did that."

Recruiters from everywhere knocked on Jones' door and the future became a vi-

No one would suggest that the running style of senior Crimson Tide tailback Robert Jones is that of a breakaway threat. He does his running where it's thick, close to the goalline and, usually, between the tackles.

Barry Fikes Photo





sion of glory, fame and eventual fortune.

Like his cousin, he had spent many Friday nights playing for Parker at Legion Field and wondering what it would be like if...

"Alabama would be playing there the next day," said Jones, "and a big ALABAMA would be painted in the end zones. I'd think 'Hey, I want to play there. I want to come back and be playing in a red jersey and let people holler for me.'"

Like his cousin, Jones lived the dream and signed with the Crimson Tide.

But a strange thing happened on the way to football's promised land.

First, Jones was forced to spend his rookie season away from the playing field, an academic victim of Proposition 48.

"Everybody expected me to play right away, because I was Mr. Football," Jones said. "But I had to wait. That kind of put me behind a lot with the coaching staff we had. I never felt I had the opportunity to prove myself."

When the fall of 1989 rolled around, Humphrey moved on to become the National Football League's hottest rookie with the Denver Broncos, while Jones languished as a third-string tailback. After falling behind the other backs in learning the system, Jones mainly watched as Siran Stacy came out of junior college to lead Alabama's backfield corps that season.

Jones would carry the ball just nine times as sophomore, gaining 25 yards. It makes life tough for a man who was used to gaining 25 yards in about a minute of action in high school.

"A couple of times I was down because I wasn't getting the playing time," said Jones of that 1989 season. "But Bobby told me to go out and continue to work hard and my time would come. He tells me to keep my head up."

So, Jones came back out and worked hard. But with Stacy back for his senior season, it didn't look like the hard work would produce a lot of playing time, especially after new Tide Head Coach Gene Stallings announced plans to give the ball to Stacy 30 times a game.

But then Stacy fell to the turf of Legion Field, injured in Alabama's opener against Southern Miss. Stallings had to turn to the supporting cast.

That not only meant Jones' chance he had waited on for three years was upon him, but a chance as well for Derrick Lassic and freshmen Chris Anderson and Tarrant Lynch.

The Crimson Tide ran tailbacks in-and-out like a relay team. The starting "dashers" were Anderson and Lassic, the break-away, open-field type runners who carried the threat of the long run with them at all times.

And then there was Jones, the finisher.

Alabama's Mr. Touchdown, as he came to be known. Once the Tide offense moved inside the 20, Anderson or Lassic usually came to the bench and Jones was



Over the years Alabama has had running backs who were something of touchdown specialists, men sent into the trenches to wrap up the drives. Robert Jones is such a specialist, a Mr. Touchdown.

Barry Fikes Photo

sent in.

"I guess we had to rotate like that," Jones said. "I was a bigger back than Derrick and Chris. I'm satisfied. I can't complain about my role last year. It helped the team."

He scored nine touchdowns on the year, gaining 255 yards on 79 carries, including a 58-yard, two-touchdown performance against Mississippi State. He had a three-

touchdown outing against Cincinnati.

"They kidded me a couple of times," said Jones, "how they'd bring it down there, then I'd come in and score. But I'd tell them that's why they're in there, to break a long run."

"They're not depending on me to break a 90-yard run or an 80-yard run. They kid me a lot, but they understand. They're satisfied with their roles, also."

It may be more than Jones' cannon-like 15-foot-9, 205-pound frame that makes him effective inside an opponents' 20. It may be his mentality, that of a heavy-weight boxer, which tells him not to finesse anybody but to take himself straight at the defender.

"I go around them sometimes," he said, "but the majority of the time I like to punish them. Because, before the end of the game they're going to punish me, so I might as well get mine over with now."

As spring training got under way this year, Assistant Coach Larry Kirksey, who tutors Bama running backs, said "Robert has a lot of natural running ability. He's a good, strong, tough runner. A lot of times you look for a guy with a 4.3 or a 4.4 (time in the 40-yard dash). Robert doesn't have that. But he knows how to run. We've been in the process of looking at film from last fall and from what I can tell Robert did almost everything right."

Last season did more than put a few numbers on Jones' collegiate stats sheet. It gave him something more valuable, a huge dose of confidence to carry into this spring, the beginning of Jones' senior campaign.

"Heading into this season, my confidence is up," he said. "I think I had a good season last year. It could have been better, but I'm satisfied. I feel I helped the team. I'm just ready for this year and hope I accomplish more than I did last year."

Which may be tough, considering Stacy's announced return to the Crimson Tide for his final season. But the challenge of beating out a player the caliber of Stacy drives Jones.

"I love the competition with him coming back," said Jones. "We have a good backfield and I guess we'll be on rotation like we were last year. There's definitely a lot more that I have to do this year, being my last year of eligibility."

"I don't think I'll be good enough to go on into the National Football League, but I'm going to go out this year and maybe somebody will peek over my shoulder and whisper in my ear. I would be excited to play after college."

The story is a famous one by now, how Humphrey grew up across from Legion Field and sold Cokes at Tide football games. But Jones didn't live near his cousin, although he saw him every day.

"I was a church-going kid," he said, "a kid who obeyed elderly people. I played all the sports. If I was with my friends, I was wild, jumping around and having fun. But if I was around people I didn't know, I was a quiet kid. People always said I was shy."

Jones grew up near Bessemer, which wasn't far enough away to escape the comparisons to Humphrey. They were everywhere he went, particularly high school and church (where he and Humphrey went everyday but Saturday).

"It used to bother me a lot, but I'm over it," Jones said. "It started my sophomore

year. People found out I was Bobby Humphrey's cousin. Ever since then, it's been comparing Robert and Bobby.

"It was unfair to me, because they wouldn't let me play off my talent and my ability. They tried to build me up by what he's done. But I wanted them to judge me by my talent."

Thanks to the comparisons (unfair or not), Jones has found himself having to prove himself most of his life.

"Up until last year, I had to prove myself," he said. "Last year I proved myself and everybody knows why I got Mr. Football my senior year and why I rushed for 2,000 yards my senior year and scored 33 touchdowns."

"Before that, people said 'Can he play? Can he run? Can he catch?'"

Jones said the change in coaching staffs has helped him personally, as well as the team. He feels more free to play his game and to express himself—whether it's a dance after a touchdown or the earring he wears in his left ear.

"Coach Stallings is not as strict as (former Alabama) Coach (Bill) Curry," he said. "Your personality is your business. The way you approach someone, that's your business. With Coach Curry here, the players weren't satisfied. They'd go around in groups and talk. It just wasn't right."

"But the players around here now are happy. They just love the coaching staff. We're more loose. You play better knowing the coach is behind you instead of against you sometimes."

Although Jones thinks the world of Stallings and loves his open-door policy to his players, things didn't get off to a great start between the two.

Stallings suspended Jones during last summer practice as a disciplinary measure, causing him to sit out the Southern Miss game. But Jones doesn't want to get a negative label attached to his name.

"I want to clear up that I am not a troublemaker," he said. "It was just a misunderstanding that me and Coach Stallings had. He doesn't hold a grudge against me and I don't hold a grudge against him."

"He's just like a father to me. He's a father to all of us. I love him as a coach, as well as a person."

Sometimes it must seem like an eternity for Robert Jones, since those days at Parker high. Sometimes it could seem like yesterday.

It's been a long road for the man who was filled with so much promise, so much hope and so many dreams.

But he keeps working and keeps pushing to fulfill not only his expectations but the expectations of so many who predicted greatness for the man who was "better than Bobby Humphrey."

Remember, when times get rough, he's got his cousin/best friend in his corner. And the telephone line is always open to Denver.

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She's More Than Supporting

by Barbara Butler

After a year in which injuries limited her performance, soph gymnast is starring

In 1990, Alabama gymnast Dana Dobransky faced a season with little or no glory. A stress fracture in her leg limited her competition abilities and the former USA national team member mostly played a support role for her teammates.

But now in 1991, Dobransky is seeing the glory and her performance for the Tide thus far is well deserving of every accolade she receives.

"Last season was difficult for me because when I came in here I wanted to do as much as I could and be a part of the team and because of my leg, I wasn't allowed to do the things that I wanted to do," Dobransky said.

In her freshman year, Dobransky rarely saw the competition floor except as a spectator. It wasn't until the SEC Championship that she started to see the light at the end of the tunnel. At the conference championship, Dobransky scored a 9.65 on the balance beam as she helped Alabama win its second SEC title in three years. One week later in Auburn, Dobransky scored a 9.70 on the beam as Alabama won its 14th dual meet of the season. Her best showing of the year came at the NCAA Central Regional Championship in Minneapolis, where she won first place on the balance beam with a season high 9.725.

The positive strides Dobransky made at the end of her freshman year reassured her that good things were to come in 1991. "Knowing there was something out there for me, increased my inner drive to excel," Dobransky said.

"Improving my tricks, adding new things and increasing my difficulty in order to be up to the level of NCAA championship winners is what really drove me the most," she added.

Everything Dobransky has done to boost her level of performance has worked, because 1991 has been a stellar year for the sophomore from Sterling Heights, Michigan. Through the first eight meets of the season, she posted career high marks on every event and in Alabama's season opener against Auburn, she won her first collegiate all-around title, with a 38.35.

The addition of Dobransky in the all-

around competition also pushes teammate Dee Dee Foster to remain her best, because she knows there is always someone behind her.

"I think the addition of Kim (Masters) and myself to the all-around has helped Dee Dee (Foster) because it pushes her to always be her best. We all help each other at practice and at meets. The seventh person, who is the alternate, is just as important as the six people competing because she is pushing the top six to stay at the top competition level so they will remain in the lineup," Dobransky explained.

With success comes added pressure to always perform at the highest level. Dobransky faces the pressure head on not letting it affect her routines.

"At one time I began thinking, 'Okay Dana, you're doing well, people are going to expect you to do this all the time now.' Dee Dee told me that she felt the same way, but you can't let it affect how you perform. You can only go out and do your best. That's all anyone can ask," Dobransky said.

She has taken that basic principle and is using it as her motto for this year: "Just go out and do the best job I can."

Dobransky is quick to note that sometimes she stops and thinks, "I've come so far. I'm performing better than I ever have before and I should be very happy and pleased."

Besides performing better, one of Dobransky's biggest thrills comes after the meet when friends and fans, "come up and tell me that I look good and that they are proud of me."

As the scores improve, so does the recognition and, as with many athletes, Dobransky has learned what it feels like to be a role model. She enjoys that role and takes responsibility for her position in the eyes of young people.

"One of the special benefits is when the kids come up and ask for my autograph and tell me, 'You are doing so good. Someday I'm going to be a gymnast just like you.' The feeling I get inside is not explainable."

"More than being a role model, I love having the opportunity to encourage other

gymnasts that I trained with to stay in the sport, because it is worth it to have the chance to compete in college. There is so much glory in college and many gymnasts feel that if they don't make the national team or go to the Olympics that they're nothing. That couldn't be farther from the truth," Dobransky said.

In addition to the competition that collegiate gymnastics offers Dobransky, she has also taken advantage of the academic opportunities at the University. She studies telecommunications and film. She decided on that field after making her film debut in the film "American Anthem" starring 1984 Olympian Mitch Gaylord and Janet Jones.

"Being a part of a movie and participating in the behind-the-scenes action gave me a taste of what the industry is like. In my college classes, I was already a step ahead, because I was familiar with television cameras and studio sets," Dobransky said.

When most fans hear that Dobransky was in the movie, they immediately want to rent it and watch for the scenes that she played in. She warns though, that if anyone is anxious to watch the movie, "They would see me, but they wouldn't know it was me. I was little and I had short, short hair. There is one time you can see me on beam, but other than that, I'm just in the background."

Dobransky owes her chance in film to gymnastics. While a member of the national team, she competed in Israel with Mitch Gaylord, who was also a national team member.

"I got to know Mitch on the trip. Not long after returning from the trip, my coach said that Mitch called and asked if I wanted to be background in his movie. They needed gymnasts and I fit the profile of what they needed," she said.

If Dobransky learned anything from her brief film stint, it was that hard work goes into any production, be it sports or a movie. After working up to 16 hours a day on the set, she made a decision regarding the industry.

"I told my mom that if I was ever in a

movie again, I was going to be a star. None of this background stuff for me anymore."

Just like getting her feet wet in the film industry, Dobransky also got a taste of national competition last season at the NCAA Championships. She competed on the balance beam and had a chance to get the feel for that level of competition. Now she is ready for the 1991 nationals in Tuscaloosa, because she knows it is her turn to contribute more towards the team score.

In preparing for the NCAA Championships in April, Dobransky continues to push herself to be the best while also encouraging her teammates to do the same.

"We have five freshmen this year and I want to do everything possible to make them the best they can be. I always try to keep a positive attitude in the gym. It isn't always easy. Sometimes I'm in pain because my leg bothers me, but I stick it out and go on. I think it shows them that you can work with a little pain," she said.

Dobransky has come a long way in gymnastics, through national team competition as well as experience in a motion picture, and for her, all the hard work has been rewarded with the opportunity to be a part of the Alabama gymnastics family.

"It's all really fun: The glory, the competition, and everything else, I really enjoy doing it."

This has been a big year for sophomore gymnast Dana Dobransky. Last year as a freshman she saw only limited competition because of a stress fracture in her leg, but this year she has been one of the top all-around performers for Coach Sarah Patterson's Crimson Tide team.

Barry Fikes Photo



Tide To Host 1991 NCAA Championships

by Barbara Butler

If you're looking for something to do in April, the answer lies within the walls of Coleman Coliseum on The University of Alabama campus.

The Crimson Tide women's gymnastics team plays host to the 1991 NCAA Women's Gymnastics Championships April 19-20. The top 12 gymnastics teams

from across the country will converge on Tuscaloosa for competition that will determine the number one team in the nation.

Last year in Corvallis, Oregon, the championship trophy went to Utah. Again in 1991 the Lady Utes rank among the top teams in the nation. Utah returned all but one gymnast from the 1990 championship team. Expect them to make a run for the school's seventh NCAA

Championship title.

Recognized names on the Ute team include 1988 Olympian Missy Marlowe, who scored a perfect 10 on the uneven bars earlier this season. She finished fourth on the uneven bars and second on the floor exercise last year and was named an All-America in each event. Two other top competitors for Utah are Shelly Schaerrer and Kristin Kenoyer. The pair took second



LSU's Rachell Fruge, who has been ranked second through most of this year in all-around competition in the nation, leads the Tigers.

and third respectively in the all-around at the 1990 championships. Schaerrer became a three-time All-America with top eight finishes in the all-around, the uneven bars and the floor exercise. Kenoyer won All-America honors in the all-around, vault, balance beam and floor exercise.

To Alabama fans it is no surprise the Tide is once again among the top teams in the country. Alabama finished second last year by .325 and the Crimson Tide team is again expected to contend for the title. Alabama boasts a program that has finished no lower than fourth in the nation since 1985. Coaches Sarah and David Patterson brought the program to national attention and have taken a team to the NCAA Championships every year dating back to 1983.

Returning for Alabama is four-time All-America Dee Dee Foster, the 1990 NCAA All-Around Champion. Foster said, "My number one goal is to do whatever is necessary to help my team win a national championship. If I can put up high scores and give us a chance at winning, then that is what I want to do."

Competing in her second season with the Tide, Foster continues on her record setting path. Midway through the 1991 season, she has already scored career

highs in every event and has set or tied every Alabama school record.

Alabama also has the benefit of a healthy Dana Dobransky. Last season the former USA national team member was slowed by a stress fracture in her left leg. Back in the lineup and healthy, Dobransky has proven that she is one of the top all-around gymnasts in the country. So far in 1991, she has won the all-around once (against Auburn) and set career highs in every event.

In addition to Foster and Dobransky, Alabama continually receives outstanding

performances from senior Kim Masters, who ranks in the top 20 on vault and in the all-around. Senior Tina Rinker and juniors Gina Basile and Katherine Kelleher also have contributed to the Tide's winning ways in 1991. Junior Shea McFall, an All-America on the vault, has been held back due to a sprained ankle in the fall, but she is regaining competition strength and should be on the floor for the championships.

Alabama's five freshmen, Wendy Chalmers, Keri Duley, Sheryl Dundas, Kara Stilp and Marti Watson add to the depth and talent of this squad. Each has seen competition during the regular season and each will play a pivotal role in Alabama's championship performance.

In addition to Utah and Alabama, expect to see the 1987 & 1989 NCAA Champion Georgia Bulldogs in the hunt for the championship title. Georgia added to its team's depth and talent with the signing of 1988 Olympian Hope Spivey. Freshmen Spivey and Kelly Macy who rank among the nation's elite in every event join veterans Heather Stepp and Sandy Rowlette on a Georgia team that will most definitely be among the top five qualifiers for the championships meet.

Definitely not to be left out of the na-

Ticket Information

Tickets for the NCAA Gymnastics Championships, to be held in Coleman Coliseum on The University of Alabama campus April 19-20, are available through the Alabama ticket office in the coliseum.

The cost of a package, which includes both days of competition, is \$18 for an adult ticket, \$10 for a student ticket. Credit card orders may be given by telephone, (205) 348-6111.

Friday's sessions begin at 4:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., while Saturday's session begins at 7 p.m.

tional picture are the Beavers of Oregon State University. Throughout the season, the team has consistently remained in the top 10 and at the midway point of 1991, the Beavers were the only team to have defeated number one ranked Utah.

A crowd favorite at the 1990 NCAA Championships, hosted by Oregon State, Joy Selig returns to the championships for her final year. She captured first place on both the balance beam and floor exercise last year and finished 10th all-around. Look for former USA national team member Chari Knight and sophomore Amy Durham to join Selig in the all-around. All three currently rank among the top 20 gymnasts in the all-around.

Besides Utah, Alabama, Georgia and Oregon State a host of other top-20 schools are in contention to qualify for the national championship. Consistently among the top schools are Florida, LSU, UCLA and Arizona, each of which participated in the championships last year.

Florida's Pam Titus, an All-America on the floor exercise and uneven bars, scored a perfect 10 on her floor routine early in the 1991 season.

LSU, another top SEC team, is led by Rachelle Fruge, who ranks among the nation's top 10 all-arounders. Last year she finished fourth in the all-around.

UCLA returns All-America Carol Ulrich and for Arizona, Anna Basaldua continually ranks among the nation's elite on vault, floor exercise and in the all-around.

It is still too early to make a solid statement telling which teams will compete for the national crown, but one thing is for sure, every team that is present will give the crowd an unforgettable performance.

Friday, April 19, the team competition commences with the bottom six qualifiers competing at 4:30 p.m. The first six seeds will compete in the evening session at 7:30 p.m. Friday's competition will determine the 1991 national team champion as well as the 1991 all-around champion. The gymnasts in first through eighth place will be named All-Americans in the all-around.

Saturday night focuses on the individual competition. The top eight (may be more in the event of a tie) qualifiers on each event will compete for the national championship on the vault, uneven bars, balance beam and floor exercise. In addition, the top eight gymnasts on each event will be named 1991 All-Americans.

As a spectator, plan to witness two exciting evenings of competition as the best collegiate gymnasts in the nation vie for the 1991 NCAA Team Championship and the NCAA individual championships.

Dee Dee Foster took home the heavy metal as a freshman at last year's NCAA meet. She leads Alabama as the Tide hosts this year's event.

University of Alabama Photo



Tide Continues As One Of Best

by Kirk McNair

Loss to Arkansas in NCAA Tournament doesn't take away from successes

There is a temptation to remember the final game, an ignominious exit from the NCAA Championship Tournament at

the familiar time: first game in the Sweet 16. However, memory of that 93-70 loss at the hands of Arkansas should include the fact that only 16 of the nation's hundreds of Division I college basketball teams were still alive in the national championship tournament.

Sure, Bama had been a preseason projection as a possible Final Four team. And when the Tide defeated Wake Forest to advance to the Sweet 16, Wake Forest Coach Dave Odom spoke of Alabama in terms of being able to play with any team.

In truth, Coach Wimp Sanderson's Crimson Tide was not capable of playing

with any team. It was good enough to romp through another Southeastern Conference Tournament, winning its third straight championship, fourth in five years; but it was not able to win the SEC regular season championship, something almost everyone expected. The Tide was also capable of losing to Wichita State. And against the very good teams, notably North Carolina early and Arkansas late, Alabama was overmatched. Alabama was a team that could be held to 55 points by a Vanderbilt, then come back in a couple of weeks and score 55 points in the first half in a victory over Kentucky.

However, the downside notwithstanding, it was another successful year for Alabama basketball and for Tide Head Coach Wimp Sanderson. First to be considered is the success some now consider a failure: reaching the Sweet 16. Sanderson has led Bama to that plateau six times in his 11 years as head coach. Alabama has never advanced beyond that, but it is not because he and his staff decided to quit coaching or his players decided not to play hard. A trademark of Sanderson's Alabama teams from day one through the loss to Arkansas is that Bama is well-prepared and well-coached and that Tide players give their all. The 1990-91 Alabama was no exception.

Very, very few teams finish the season with a victory. The national champion does, but 15 others who reached the Sweet 16 and 63 others who were good enough to make the tournament field end the year in defeat. Murray State and Wake Forest were among those finishing before Alabama, because Alabama won two games in the NCAA Tournament. The winner of the NIT does (a big deal only for the team that does it). A few teams not good enough to make the tournament do. And a team like Kentucky, ineligible for the tournament because of cheating, can. But it is the nature of basketball, a tournament game, that most don't.

Alabama's final record was a more than respectable 23-10. The Tide went 3-0 in the SEC Tournament and 2-1 in the NCAA Tournament. In many respects it was a typical Alabama season, and it is a tribute to Tide coaches and players of the past decade and a half that a typical season is a very good season.

The Arkansas game showed one defect of this year's Alabama basketball team. Bama did not have good depth. At the beginning of the season it was thought that depth would be a strong point. In the end

It may be the most difficult man to replace for the Crimson Tide basketball team will be point guard Gary Waites, a tenacious defender for four years and a true leader and much-improved shooter as a senior.

University of Alabama Photo



it was a six-man team. Arkansas is a nine-man team. Beyond that, three Tide players were hampered by illness (point guard Gary Waites) or injury (center Robert Horry pulled muscle, wing guard James Robinson injured knee). However, when a team that has looked so good through most of the year, particularly at tournament time, looks so bad, give credit where credit is due: Arkansas was an excellent basketball team.

There were individual honors for Alabama players during the year. Senior forward Melvin Cheatum was first team All-Southeastern Conference on the 10-man Coaches' team and on the five-man team selected by United Press International. Cheatum and senior point guard Gary Waites were both second team on the Associated Press team and freshman James Robinson was third team on both the Associated Press and United Press International teams.

Waites was first team on Sanderson's favorite honor roll: the five-man Coaches' All-SEC Defensive Team.

Robinson was selected to the SEC All-Freshman Team and was named by some as the SEC Freshman of the Year.

At the SEC Tournament in Nashville, a small group of the many sportswriters and broadcasters covering the tournament choose the all-tournament team. Bama was certainly well-represented with Cheatum, Robinson and junior small forward Latrell Sprewell. However, the man who will likely remember the announcement of the team longest is Waites, who did not make it. When the announcement of the team was complete, the remaining fans, many of them wearing Crimson and White but also others, took up the chant: "Gary Waites!" They saw what the selection committee did not, that Alabama's

championship was due in great part to the performance of Waites.

Indeed, Waites will probably be the hardest member of this Alabama team to replace next year, which is not to overlook the considerable skills of Cheatum. Bama had four seniors: Waites, Cheatum, Bryant Lancaster and Marcus Campbell. Although Lancaster started, he was merely a little-used substitute whose playing time came at the beginning of games rather than at some other time. It was Sanderson's decision that Robinson would be more effective without the pressure of being a starter, and so Lancaster's role was an important one. (The use of Lancaster as a starter also gives Sanderson a crying point for preseason 1991-92, that he lost three starters.) Campbell, a center, never became a top player, almost certainly because he was a relatively small man in a big man's position. He is listed as 6-8 but is really 6-5.

So what is ahead for Alabama? Things do not get easier. The SEC expansion affects basketball more than any other sport. The additions of Arkansas and South Carolina are good news for football coaches (two middle-of-the-pack type teams), bad news for basketball coaches. Another stumbling block for Alabama insofar as winning a fourth straight SEC Tournament title when the extravaganza moves to Birmingham next year will be the end of probation for Kentucky.

Bama has, in effect, three starters and the two most-used backup men from this season returning. Horry and Robinson have exceptional skills, although Sanderson has to harness them. Sprewell is another fine addition from the junior college ranks and a measure of credit for Bama's late-season success has to be awarded Sprewell.

Center Marcus Webb, the lone wide body

on Alabama's team, has shown at times he can be very good, but he also has a tendency to disappear (not easy for a man 6-8, 270). Point guard Marcus Jones showed flashes of exceptional offensive skills in early Alabama games, but his defensive deficiencies kept him relegated to a minor role for most of the year. There must also be concern about a basketball player who was not academically eligible to participate as a freshman because the demands of basketball keep those players from the classroom so much. (A football player might miss part of one day of class during an entire season because of his sport. A basketball player will miss an average of over a day per week during the SEC portion of the schedule.)

Anyone who attended an Alabama basketball game this season is aware of one redshirt freshman who is anxious to be a playing part of the Crimson Tide. It was appropriate that when Bama cut the nets in Nashville after winning the SEC Tournament that 6-10 center Cedric Moore was first man given the scissors. Moore was the Tide's number one cheerleader during games and a hard-working member of the scout team during practices. There's no sense in second-guessing the decision to hold Moore out, but one can't help but wonder what Sanderson would do if he had that choice to make again. Based on his performance in practice, Moore looks like a sure bet to play a prominent role for the Tide next year.

There are some other returning players: little-used backups Darby Rich (an Academic All-SEC performer who could graduate and be in law school by next year) and Kenneth Rice and redshirt freshman forward Greg Glass. However, the bulk of Bama's remaining help for 1990-91 will probably have to come from recruiting.

Final 1990-91 University of Alabama Basketball Statistics

Record: 23-10 SEC: 12-6 Home: 11-1 Road: 5-7 Neutral: 7-2

Name	G-GS	Avg. Min.	FG-FGA	Pct.	FT-FTA	Pct.	Reb-Avg.	PF-Dq	Pts. Avg.	As	TO	BS	St
Robinson	33-4	29.4	194-413	.470	102-146	.699	130-3.9	98-4	554 16.8	40	76	15	35
Cheatum	33-33	35.4	217-450	.482	108-151	.715	256-7.8	81-1	545 16.5	24	63	25	38
Horry	32-30	30.0	133-296	.449	82-102	.804	260-8.1	104-2	381 11.9	56	74	77	38
Waites	33-33	31.8	123-245	.502	49-57	.860	99-3.0	60-0	347 10.5	176	100	6	27
Sprewell	33-17	26.2	116-227	.511	58-84	.690	165-5.0	53-0	295 8.9	62	54	16	35
Webb	33-7	17.3	77-145	.531	29-49	.592	159-4.8	87-3	183 5.5	21	40	4	12
Jones	31-0	10.7	43-105	.410	20-29	.690	21-0.7	38-1	112 3.6	42	49	1	8
Campbell	33-12	10.15	32-75	.427	21-33	.636	77-2.3	43-0	85 2.6	9	28	8	12
Rice	10-0	2.7	5-19	.263	6-8	.750	3-0.3	6-0	18 1.8	0	7	0	0
Lancaster	31-28	9.3	17-62	.274	8-16	.500	34-1.1	29-0	43 1.4	19	28	0	6
Rich	14-0	3.4	3-8	.375	1-4	.250	14-1.0	7-0	7 0.5	2	7	3	0
Pearson	7-0	1.7	0-0	—	3-6	.500	1-0.1	1-0	3 0.4	2	0	0	2
Wilson	2-0	1.0	0-1	.000	0-0	—	0-0.0	0-0	0 0.0	0	0	0	0
Lawrence	2-0	3.5	3-5	.600	1-2	.500	4-2.0	0-0	7 3.5	0	0	0	0
Team							107						

ALABAMA	33	963-2051	.470	488-687	.710	1330-40.3	607-11	2580 78.2	453	526	165	213
Opponents	33	903-2119	.426	408-603	.677	1207-36.6	605-14	2395 72.6	427	479	101	269

Three-Point Field Goals: Alabama (166-416, .399): Robinson 64-153, .418; Cheatum 3-8, .375; Horry 33-98, .337; Waites 52-101, .515; Sprewell 5-12, .417; Webb 0-0; Jones 6-26, .231; Campbell 0-0; Rice 2-9, .222; Lancaster 1-7, .143; Rich 0-1, .000; Pearson 0-0; Wilson 0-1, .000; Lawrence 0-0. Opponents (181-563, .321)

Bama Looks To Add More

by Kirk McNair

Although three already signed, Tide wants more players in late period

While Alabama has had a successful basketball season and a successful early recruiting season, the work is not over. Another basketball signing date is approaching. High school seniors and junior college sophomores who did not sign in the early period are now being hotly recruited for the signing period, April 10-May 15.

Alabama has four seniors and two other players left the team earlier this year. Since the Tide has already signed three players, there is room for three more. And if one or more current player is not going to be a member of the team next year (there is no evidence of that), Bama Head Coach Wimp Sanderson could conceivably add even more players in the spring.

Alabama has reportedly already received one verbal commitment from a high school player. Coach Tim Matthews of Sumpter County High School in Americus, Georgia, told **BAMA** on March 20 that his star guard, **LaKista McCuller**, had selected Alabama over North Carolina State. McCuller, an all-state performer, is a 6-3, 170-pound point guard who was all-state and Georgia Coaches Player of the Year. This season he averaged 22.6 points, 8 assists and 6 rebounds per game and had a top game of 43 points in a region semifinal contest. He has been a varsity starter since the middle of his ninth grade season. The 17-year-old is a good student and his coach said there was no question he would be eligible. One recruiting service ranked him the nation's fourth best available point guard.

Bama is thought to be involved with at least one other out-of-state point guard. **Tyrone Wilson**, 6-3, 175, of Lower Richland High School in Hopkins, South Carolina, has been an all-state performer the past two years. He was also most valuable player in the South Carolina North-South All-Star Game and won the three-point shooting contest there. As a senior he averaged 16.5 points, 6 rebounds, 4.5 assists and 3.6 steals per game and led his team to a 20-8 record, sixth in the state. As a junior he had his top scoring game, a 37-point performance. Wilson is academically eligible. He is coached by Gary Fulmer, who said Wilson is also consider-



Alonzo Johnson

ing Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina State.

There have been reports linking Alabama with 6-0 point guard **Pointer Williams** of New Orleans, but sources there say Williams will decide between Tulane and Arkansas.

Bama has also been mentioned with 6-4 guard **Demond Davis** of Turner County High School in Ashburn, Georgia.

There are still a handful of prep players in the state of Alabama being recruited by various schools. Alabama is almost certainly recruiting at least one of those, the state's tallest player. **Alonzo Johnson**, a 7-foot center at Francis Marion High School in Marion, is listed as the nation's number one available center, number two available inside player. He led Coach Woodie Jackson's team to the state 3A championship, where he was the most valuable player. He was also named all-state and the 3A player of the year. He will represent the United States on a Junior Olympic Team in Germany this summer and has also been selected a McDonald's All-America. Johnson, who weighs 235 and is 18 years old, started just one year for Francis Marion after transferring there last year, then being injured. However, as a senior he averaged 19 points, 18 rebounds, 8 blocked shots and hit 83 per cent of his free throws, 54 per cent from the field. His top game saw him score 30 points, pull down 20 rebounds and block 10 shots. His coach said he has a 2.3 grade point average, but has not yet received his standardized test score. While some reports have Johnson unofficially committed to Alabama, others say Johnson is still considering LSU and possibly Tennessee.

Cedric Neloms, a 6-5, 180-pound small forward who is expected to be a wing guard in college, has a 3.2 grade point average and made 20 on his ACT.

However, his numbers on the basketball court are even more impressive. He averaged 31 points, 14 rebounds, 6 assists, 4 blocks and 4 steals for Coach Mike Mitchell at Colbert County High School in Leighton. He is a three-year starter who was all-state this year. He had a top game of 51 points and 20 rebounds. He is considering a large number of schools, including Alabama, his coach said.

A familiar name is **Roy Rogers**. However, the Roy Rogers who starred for Linden High School in basketball this year was not a familiar name until late in the season, when major colleges began looking at him as a prospect. He is a 6-10, 196-pound center/power forward for the state champions. He played for Coach Bobby Hall, who took over for Willie Scott when Coach Scott was sent to Saudi Arabia with the National Guard. Rogers, who is a good student and has made 22 on the ACT, averaged 20 points, 11 rebounds and 10 blocked shots per game. Paramount High School will be glad to see him graduate. In the finals of the area tournament Rogers blistered Paramount for 39 points, 15 rebounds, and 8 blocked shots. In a regular season game Rogers had what may be a state record of 17 blocked shots. He was a two-year starter and all-state and most valuable player in the state tournament as he led Linden to the 2A title.

An irony is the Alabama Sports Writers Association selected **Victor Newman**, a 6-7 center of Houston Academy in Dothan, as this year's "Mr. Basketball." Reports say Newman was not recruited by either Alabama or Auburn and he has committed to North Carolina State.

One other top unsigned player in the state, guard **Antonio Dixon** of Phenix City Central, is reportedly headed for junior college.

There has been much more attention on the junior college ranks by major colleges in recent years. And Alabama has certainly had great success with its few junior college acquisitions—guard Alvin Lee, center David Benoit and now small forward Latrell Sprewell. So it would not be a surprise if Tide recruiters were not once again checking out junior college players.

Bama didn't have far to go to check out one junior college star. **Leonard White**, a 6-6, 210-pound power forward at Faulkner Junior College in Bay Minette. White, who is from Century, Florida, averaged 26.7 points, 13.1 rebounds, and 1.5 blocked shots for Coach Jack Robertson. Faulkner was Alabama junior college state champion with a 30-3 record prior to the National Junior College Tournament. He had a top game of 50 points. He had scored 2,160 points in his two-year career.

at Faulkner, a school record, and was the nation's sixth-leading junior college scorer. He was the most valuable player in the state and in the Alabama junior college tournament. One report called him the nation's most highly-sought junior college player and his coach said he had been contacted by some 55 major colleges.

Another junior college power forward who has been linked with Alabama is **André Perry** of Coffeyville Junior College in Kansas. Perry, who is from Detroit, is 6-7, 220. He averaged 23.4 points, 11.3 rebounds and 1.8 blocked shots per game for Coach Bin Graefe and was a unanimous all-conference selection and the most valuable player in the conference all-star game. He had a top game of 37 points and it came on the road. He had numerous 30-plus scoring games in his career at Coffeyville. Perry has been selected to play for the United States Junior College All-Stars against the Texas Junior College All-Stars on April 4. Alabama is one of a large number of schools he is considering, his coach said.

Bama has also been linked with a couple of junior college point guards whose teams

Update On Tide Signees

Here is how Alabama's three basketball signees from the early period did in their final high school seasons:

Jason Caffey, a 6-8, 215-pound inside player (who will be a small forward at Alabama) averaged 18 points, 11 rebounds, 3.1 blocked shots, 4.4 assists and 2.3 steals for Coach Bill Ryan's Mobile Davidson team. Coach Ryan said Caffey had made a 24 on his ACT and is eligible. He had a high game of 32 points and was selected all-state, a McDonald's All-America and *Scholastic* magazine player of the year in Alabama.

Bryan Passink, a 6-4, 175-pound shooting guard averaged 27.6 points, 6.1 rebounds and 4.3 assists for Coach Tommy Cannon at Benedictine Military School in Savannah, Georgia. He is the all-time leading scorer in school history. He had a top game of 53 points. He was an honorable mention All-America by *Sporting News*, *Street & Smith* and McDonald's. He was also named one of the nation's top ten shooters by *Sporting News*. Passink was named the 1991 Player of the Year in Savannah.

Russell Walters, a 6-9, 210-pound center led Coach Keith Robinson's Northeast Jones team of Laurel, Mississippi, to its best record in history, 28-6, and second place in the state. He averaged 24 points, 12.5 rebounds and 2 blocked shots per game. He was all-state and will play for the Mississippi All-Star team against the Alabama All-Star team.

tioned for their conference championships in Texas.

Ron Bayless of Kilgore averaged 15.3 points, 5.7 assists and 2.2 steals for Coach Shawn Scanlon's team. He was a two-year all-conference performer. Bayless is 6-2, 185 and originally from Indianapolis.

Gerald Williams is a 5-10, 180-pounder at Tyler, where he averaged 12 points and 6 assists. He is originally from Shaw High School in Metairie, Louisiana, where he led his team to the state championship. The two-year starter and all-conference performer had a top game of 26 points and 8 assists.

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Recruiting Information

Reports by 7 p.m. Sunday. Basketball updates increase with the approach of signing day, April 10.

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1990-91 Alabama Winter Sports Results

Men's Basketball

86	Brazil (Exhibition)	52
88	Spirit Express (Exhibition)	83
72	Delaware	47
96	Wake Forest	95 (OT)
82	Southern Miss	84
	(@ Birmingham)	
71	@ Wichita State	74 (OT)
79	@ North Carolina (ESPN)	95
79	VMI	45
62	@ U-T-Chattanooga	58
	Blue Angels Classic @ Pensacola	
71	Towson State	52
93	North Carolina-Charlotte	67
68	@ Auburn (ESPN)	56
55	@ Vanderbilt	66
72	Florida	64
76	@ Ole Miss	73 (OT)
80	LSU (ESPN)	90
67	Georgia (CBS)	62
59	@ Mississippi State	68
88	Kentucky (JP)	83
83	@ Tennessee	74
88	Auburn	80
79	Ole Miss	74
88	@ Florida (JP)	80
66	Vanderbilt	55
81	@ LSU (ABC)	88
68	@ Georgia (JP)	73
97	Mississippi State	72
73	@ Kentucky (ESPN)	79
96	Tennessee (JP)	88
71	S-Florida	65
77	S-Auburn	59
88	S-Tennessee	69
89	N-Murray State	79
96	N-Wake Forest	88
70	N-Arkansas	93

S-Southeastern Conference Tournament
N-NCAA Tournament

Women's Basketball

68	Sweden (Exhibition)	72
	UNLV Invitational Tournament	
62	UNLV	80
76	San Francisco	61
89	Jacksonville State	79
106	Tuskegee	41
	@ Birmingham	
92	Auburn-Montgomery	69
	Radford Tournament	
96	Delaware State	44
72	Morgan State	42
78	@ Auburn-Montgomery	57
55	@ New Orleans	67
	Shoney's Classic	
72	Lamar	62
62	Georgia State	21
57	@ Louisiana Tech	63
84	@ Alabama-Birmingham	70
61	Tennessee	86
73	Vanderbilt	63
65	@ Florida State	88
99	@ Alabama State	71
69	@ Mississippi State	57
72	@ Kentucky	65
48	@ Auburn	77
72	Ole Miss	78
90	@ Florida	93 (OT)
105	Alabama State	74
66	@ LSU	78
47	@ Georgia	83
73	Mississippi State	56
77	Southeastern Louisiana	57
95	S-Florida	75
69	S-Georgia	78

S-Southeastern Conference Tournament

Gymnastics

188.85	@ Auburn	185.95
192.10	Penn State	189.50
192.75	@ Georgia	191.80
192.75	LSU @ Georgia (ESPN)	190.20
192.00	Arizona State	188.85
192.00	Auburn	186.75
192.00	Minnesota	183.75
194.15	UCLA	191.15
193.25	@ Oklahoma	189.95
193.25	Missouri @ Oklahoma	188.45
192.80	@ Nebraska	187.20
192.80	Arizona State @ Nebraska	186.65
192.50	@ Florida	192.40
192.55	@ Arizona	190.45
192.55	Michigan State @ Arizona	174.55
194.20	Nebraska	189.50
March 23	SEC Championships	2nd
	@ Lexington	
April 6	NCAA Central Regionals	
	@ Auburn	
April 19-	NCAA Championships	
April 20	(Coleman Coliseum, Tuscaloosa)	
	(All times central)	

Men's Track

Jan. 25-	USAir Invitational	
Jan. 26	(Johnson City, Tennessee)	
Feb. 2	Purple Tiger Invitational - 5th	
	(Baton Rouge, Louisiana)	
Feb. 8	Barnett Bank Invitational - 5th	
	(Gainesville, Florida)	
Feb. 23-	SEC Championships - 5th	
Feb. 24	(Baton Rouge, Louisiana)	
March 2	Last Chance Invitational	
	(Indianapolis, Indiana)	
March 8-	NCAA Championships - 9th	
March 9	(Indianapolis, Indiana)	

Men's Swimming

136	Georgia	107
129	@ Texas	143
121	@ SMU	122
141	Kentucky	96
	Rammer Jammer Invitational	
	Kansas 719, Alabama 667, Georgia 531,	
	South Carolina 425, Florida State 312, Miami	
	268, Florida 254, Auburn 224	
145	Florida	87
121	Auburn	120
83	@ LSU	142
76	@ Tennessee	128
Feb. 21-	SEC Championships	3rd
Feb. 23	@ Lexington	
March 7-9	NCAA Diving Qualifying	
March 28-	NCAA Championships	All Day
March 30	@Austin, Texas	
	(All times central)	

Women's Swimming

124	Georgia	169
94	@ Texas	181
97	@ SMU	144
130	Kentucky	111
	Rammer Jammer Invitational	
	Florida 702, Georgia 683, Kansas 479,	
	Alabama 449, Miami 368, Auburn 333, South	
	Carolina 321, Florida State 216	
110	Florida	183
137	Vanderbilt	72
123	Auburn	120
96.5	@ LSU	139.5
118	@ Tennessee	171
Feb. 21-	SEC Championships	4th
Feb. 23	@ Lexington	
March 7-9	NCAA Diving Qualifying	
March 21-	NCAA Championships	21st
March 23	@ Indianapolis, Indiana	
	(All times central)	

Women's Track

Jan. 25-	USAir Invitational	
Jan. 26	(Johnson City, Tennessee)	
Feb. 2	Purple Tiger Invitational - 2nd	
	(Baton Rouge, Louisiana)	
Feb. 8	Barnett Bank Invitational - 4th	
	(Gainesville, Florida)	
Feb. 23-	SEC Championships - 4th	
Feb. 24	(Baton Rouge, Louisiana)	
March 2	Last Chance Invitational	
	(Indianapolis, Indiana)	
March 8-	NCAA Championships	
March 9	(Indianapolis, Indiana)	

1991 Alabama Spring Sports Schedules

Baseball

8	Alcorn State	2
8	Alabama-Birmingham	5
8	@ South Alabama	10
4	@ South Alabama	3
9	@ Alabama-Birmingham	1
3	Tennessee Tech	1
8	Tennessee Tech	0
8	Illinois State	6
8	Illinois State	7
9	Northeast Louisiana	0
6	Ohio State	12
6	Furman	5
8	Ohio State	0
7	Furman	6
15	Louisville	9
7	Louisville	4
7	@ Florida	4
0	@ Florida	4
3	Eastern Kentucky	0
12	Arkansas State	3
14	Arkansas State	3
8	@ Mississippi State	1
2	@ Mississippi State	0
14	@ Mississippi State	11
Mar. 26	Illinois	1:00
Mar. 27	Illinois	1:00
Mar. 30	Tennessee (2)	4:00
Mar. 31	Tennessee	2:00
Apr. 3	Middle Tennessee State	7:00
Apr. 4	Middle Tennessee State	2:00
Apr. 6	Ole Miss (2)	4:00
Apr. 7	Ole Miss	2:00
Apr. 9	Murray State	7:00
Apr. 10	Murray State	2:00
Apr. 13	@ Georgia (2)	4:00
Apr. 14	@ Georgia	1:30
Apr. 17	Samford	7:00
Apr. 20	Auburn (2)	4:00
Apr. 21	Auburn	2:00
Apr. 23	Auburn @ Montgomery	7:00
Apr. 27	@ LSU (2)	4:00
Apr. 28	@ LSU	2:00
May 4	Kentucky (2)	4:00
May 5	Kentucky	2:00
May 7	South Alabama	7:00
May 8	South Alabama	2:00
May 9	Auburn @ Dothan	7:00
May 11	@ Vanderbilt (2)	1:00
May 12	@ Vanderbilt	1:30
(All times Central)		

Men's Tennis

Feb. 1-	National Indoor @ Minneapolis	
Feb. 10	(Invitational for individuals)	
6	Middle Tennessee	3
	Ice Volleys @ Minneapolis	
4	Clemson	5
5	Miami	4
7	Murray State	2
6	Alabama-Birmingham	3
7	Southwestern Louisiana	1
4	Ole Miss	5
	Corpus Christi (Texas) Invitational	
5	Long Beach State	1
5	Notre Dame	2
5	Harvard	4
4	Ole Miss	5
1	@ Georgia	5
	Blue-Gray @ Montgomery	
5	Indiana	3
2	TCU	5
0	Arizona	0
March 28	@ Florida	TBA
April 3	LSU	2:00
April 6	@ Vanderbilt	TBA
April 8	@ Kentucky	TBA
April 13	Auburn	2:00
April 19	Tennessee	2:00
April 20	Mississippi State	2:00
April 25-28	SEC Championships @ Oxford	
May 17-26	NCAA @ Athens	
(All times Central)		

Women's Tennis

	ALABAMA INVITATIONAL	
8	South Alabama	1
8	Ohio State	1
6	Alabama-Birmingham	0
	COMMODORE CUP	
4	Arkansas	5
4	Wake Forest	5
6	Samford	3
0	Georgia	9
5	Tennessee	3
	INDIANA INVITATIONAL	
1	Indiana	6
6	TCU	3
6	Texas A&M	3
3	@ Florida State	6
7	Mississippi State	2
	HOUSTON INVITATIONAL	
6	@ Houston	3
7	North Carolina @ Houston	2
3	Kentucky	5
March 30	@ Auburn	1:00
April 6	Florida	10:00 a.m.
April 11	@ Ole Miss	2:00
April 13	@ LSU	TBA
April 20	Vanderbilt	12:00
April 21	Auburn-Montgomery	12:00
April 25-28	SEC Championship @ Knoxville	
May 8-May 16	NCAA @ Palo Alto	
(All times Central)		

Men's Golf

Feb. 6-10	Gator Invitational @ Gainesville	
	(Tie for 4th of 18 teams)	
Feb. 20-24	Doral/Taylor Made Invitational	
	@ Miami	
	(tie for 7th of 18 teams)	
March 6-10	Jerry Pate Invitational	
	@ Pensacola	
	(tie for 3rd of 15 teams)	
March 20-24	Southeastern Invitational	
	@ Montgomery	
	(2nd of 15 teams)	
April 17-21	Eagle Invitational	
	@ Savannah, Ga.	
April 24-28	Billy Hitchcock Invitational	
	@ Auburn	
May 8-14	SEC Championships @ Starkville	
May 22-24	NCAA Regionals, TBA	

Women's Golf

Feb. 15-17	Lady Gator Invitational	
	@ Gainesville	
	(10th of 12 teams)	
March 1-3	Auburn Invitational	
	@ Eufaula	
	(3rd of 8 teams)	
March 15-17	LSU Fairwood Invitational	
	@ Baton Rouge	
	(5th of 13 teams)	
April 5-7	SMU Invitational	
	@ Dallas	
April 19-21	USA Invitational	
	@ Foley	
May 3-5	SEC Championships	
	@ Lexington	

Men's Track & Field

March 22-24	Alabama Relays	
March 29-30	Florida Relays @ Gainesville	
April 6	Crimson Classic	
	(Kansas, Michigan, Ole Miss, Indiana, Washington State)	
April 13	@ Oregon	
April 20	Ole Miss Invitational @ Oxford	
April 25-27	Penn Relays @ Philadelphia	
May 5	Auburn Invitational @ Auburn	
May 16-19	SEC Championships	
	@ Baton Rouge	
May 23	Last Chance Invitational @ Atlanta	
May 29-June 1	NCAA @ Eugene, Oregon	

Women's Track & Field

March 22-24	Alabama Relays	
March 29-30	Florida Relays @ Gainesville	
April 6	Crimson Classic	
	(Kansas, Michigan, Ole Miss, Indiana, Washington State)	
April 13	@ Oregon	
April 20	Ole Miss Invitational @ Oxford	
April 25-27	Penn Relays @ Philadelphia	
May 5	Auburn Invitational @ Auburn	
May 16-19	SEC Championships	
	@ Baton Rouge	
May 23	Last Chance Invitational @ Atlanta	
May 29-June 1	NCAA @ Eugene, Oregon	



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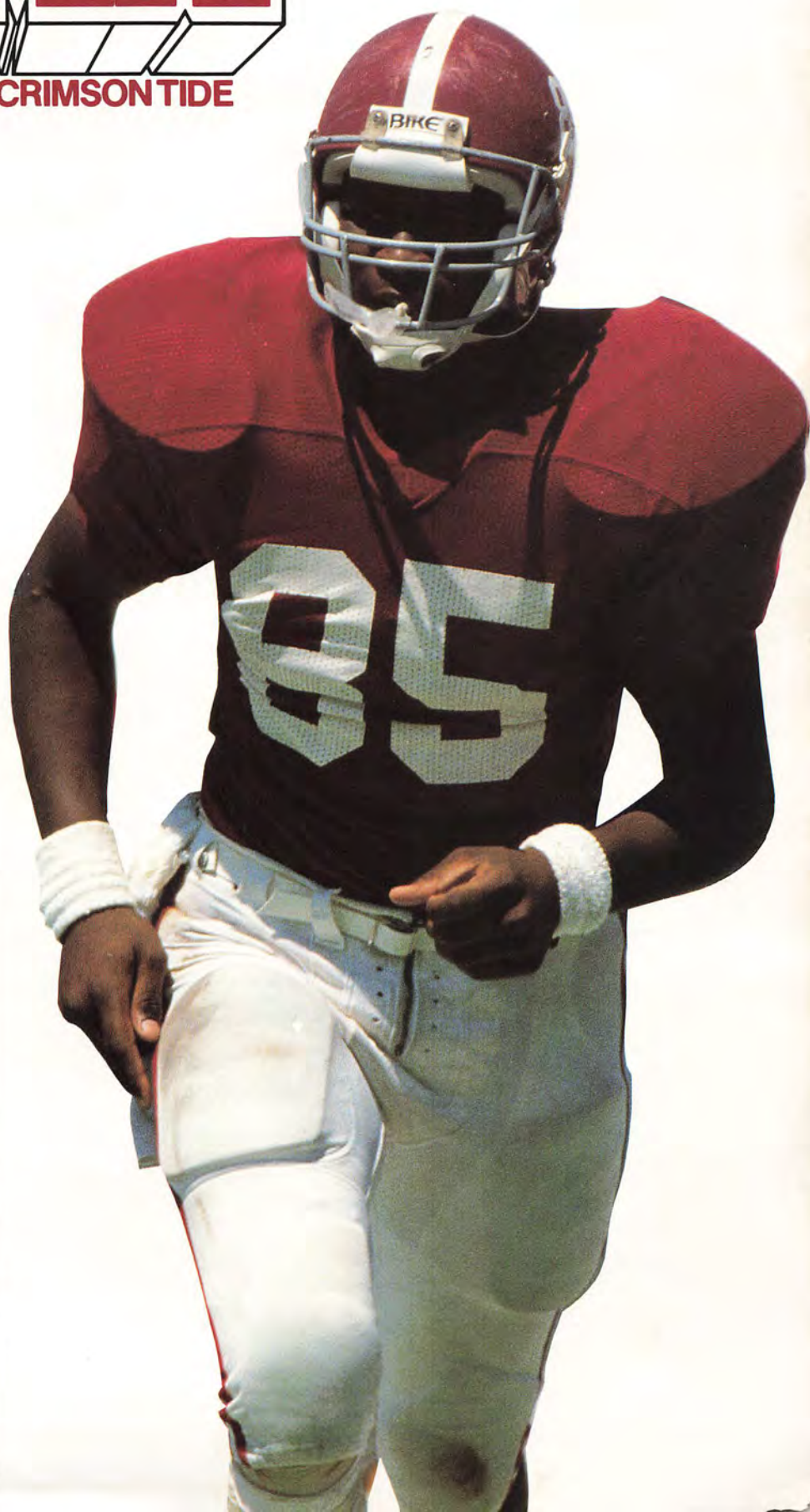
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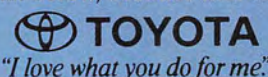
IF THEY LOOK LIKE COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYERS, YOU'RE ONLY SEEING PART OF THE PICTURE.

Toyota congratulates the 1990 Leaders of the Year and weekly Leadership Award recipients. Toyota extends special congratulations to Eddie Robinson of Alabama State University and Todd Sandroni of the University of Mississippi for being chosen as Leaders of the Year. Toyota recognizes all the students listed below for excelling in athletics, academics, and community service. Their discipline and unrelenting

effort toward these goals make them more than team players; these qualities make them leaders.

The example they have set is an inspiration to us all, and we're proud to add their names to a growing roster of Leadership Award recipients.

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